

**CALIFORNIA BOARD OF REGISTERED NURSING
APPLICATION FOR LICENSURE AS A REGISTERED NURSE**

By Examination

I. INTRODUCTION

Applicants must take the licensing examination (NCLEX-RN) if they have never been licensed as a registered nurse in another state or if they have never passed the national licensing examination. Registered nurses who are licensed in Canada must take the NCLEX-RN unless they have passed an acceptable five-part Canadian examination prior to 1980. All applicants must have completed an educational program meeting all California requirements. If you are lacking any educational requirements, you must successfully complete an approved course in that subject prior to taking the examination.

The NCLEX-RN is administered by Computerized Adaptive Testing (CAT). The candidate information brochure, which describes the CAT examination process in detail, is available upon request. With CAT, there is continuous, year-round testing, allowing eligible candidates to schedule their own examination on a date and at the location of their choice. Examination applicants should submit their applications at least four (4) months prior to when they wish to take the examination to allow for processing time and receipt of all required documents.

The Board will evaluate your application and, if found eligible, you will be provided an NCLEX-RN Candidate Bulletin with instructions regarding the fee and registration procedures for CAT.

The candidate information brochure gives registration and scheduling information. However, the Board recommends that you wait until being found eligible by the Board before registering with the testing service for CAT. The Authorization to Test will be issued and will be valid for a limited period of time. Included with the Authorization to Test is a list of test centers.

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT ISSUES:

- Processing times may vary, depending on timeliness of receipt of documents from schools, agencies, and other states or countries. Please be aware that processing of an application indicating a prior conviction(s) may take longer than other applications. Delays may also occur if the fingerprint card is returned by the Department of Justice because it is incomplete, folded or if the fingerprints are not legible.
- If you change your name and/or address after submitting an application for licensure, you must notify the Board immediately, in order to receive important information.
- Pending application files are not public record, therefore an applicant must sign and submit a release of information before the Board will release information to the public (employers, relatives, or other third parties).

I. **INTRODUCTION (con'td)**

- Once you are licensed, your address of record must be disclosed to the public upon request, under California law.
- Applicant fees are earned; therefore, fees are not refundable even if an applicant is found ineligible.

II. **REPORTING PRIOR CONVICTIONS OR DISCIPLINE AGAINST LICENSES**

Applicants are required under law to report all misdemeanor and felony convictions. "Driving under the influence" convictions must be reported. Convictions must be reported even if they have been expunged under Penal Code 1203.4 or even if a court ordered diversion program has been completed under the Penal Code or under Article 5 of the Vehicle Code. Also, all disciplinary action against an applicant's registered nurse, practical nurse, vocational nurse or other professional license must be reported.

Failure to report prior convictions or disciplinary action is considered falsification of application and is grounds for denial of licensure or revocation of license.

When reporting prior convictions or disciplinary action, **applicants are required to provide a full written explanation of:** circumstances surrounding the arrest(s), conviction(s), and/or disciplinary action(s); the date of incident(s), conviction(s) or disciplinary action(s); specific violation(s) (cite section of law if convicted), court location or jurisdiction, sanctions or penalties imposed and completion dates. **Certified** copies of court documents or state board determinations/decisions should also be included.

Note: A certified copy of the arrest report may also be requested. Applicants must also submit a description of the rehabilitative changes in their life, which would enable them to avoid future occurrences.

To make a determination in these cases, the Board considers the nature and severity of the offense, additional subsequent acts, recency of acts or crimes, compliance with court sanctions, and evidence of rehabilitation.

The burden of proof lies with the applicant to demonstrate acceptable documented evidence of rehabilitation. Examples of rehabilitation evidence include, but are not be limited to:

- Recent, dated letter from applicant describing rehabilitative efforts or changes in life to prevent future problems.
- Letters of reference on official letterhead from employers, nursing instructors, health professionals, professional counselors, parole or probation officers, or other individuals in positions of authority who are knowledgeable about your rehabilitation efforts.
- Letters from recognized recovery programs and/or counselors attesting to current sobriety and length of time of sobriety, if there is a history of alcohol or drug abuse.
- Proof of community work, schooling, self-improvement efforts.
- Court-issued certificate of rehabilitation or evidence of expungement, proof of compliance with criminal probation or parole, and orders of the court.

II. **REPORTING PRIOR CONVICTIONS OR DISCIPLINE AGAINST LICENSES (con'td)**

All of the above items should be mailed **directly** to the Board by the individual(s) or agency who is providing information about the applicant. Have these items sent to the Board of Registered Nursing, Licensing Unit, P.O. Box 944210, Sacramento, CA 94244-2100.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide sufficient rehabilitation evidence on a timely basis so that a licensing determination can be made. All evidence of rehabilitation must be submitted prior to being found eligible for an examination.

An applicant is also required to immediately report, in writing, to the Board any conviction(s) or disciplinary action(s) which occur between the date the application was filed and the date that a California registered nursing license is issued. Failure to report this information is grounds for denial of licensure or revocation of license.

NOTE: The application must be completed and signed by the applicant under the penalty of perjury.

III. **INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING FINGERPRINT CARDS/LIVE SCAN SERVICE**

All applicants for licensure by examination are required to complete and submit one fingerprint card and fee with their application(s). There are now two methods available for completing the fingerprint requirement; 1) rolling the fingerprints on a standard 8" x 8" fingerprint card, and 2) the Live Scan method of an electronic transmission directly to the Department of Justice (DOJ).

The fingerprint card/Live Scan application must be submitted in the **same name** as shown on your application for licensure. The Board of Registered Nursing will submit the fingerprint card to the California Department of Justice (DOJ) for processing. Fingerprint fees are established by DOJ. (See Application Fee Schedule.) The fees for Live Scan service varies, so please contact the Live Scan site to obtain the correct information.

IF YOU ARE USING AN ON-LINE APPLICATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE BOARD FOR THE FINGERPRINT CARD OR LIVE SCAN SERVICE APPLICATION.

HOW TO COMPLETE FINGERPRINT CARDS

Applicants must complete all items which are marked by a black "x" on **both** sides of the card. To facilitate prompt and accurate processing of the fingerprint card by the DOJ, **TYPE** or print legibly in **BLACK INK** all requested information on each card. If any color other than black is used, the card will be rejected and another card will have to be completed and submitted. The name must be identical to that submitted on the application. Use the abbreviations listed below for the physical description items.

- Height (HGT.) - Express in feet and inches. Do not use fractions of an inch; round off to the nearest inch. DO NOT USE THE METRIC SYSTEM. Example: 5'9".
- Weight (WGT) - Express in pounds. Do not use fractions of a pound; round off to the nearest pound. DO NOT USE THE METRIC SYSTEM. Example: 139 lbs.
- Color of EYES -

Black	BLK	Gray	GRY
Blue	BLU	Green	GRN
Brown	BRN	Hazel	HZL

III. INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING FINGERPRINT CARD (Cont'd)

•	Color of HAIR -	Bald	BAL	Gray	GRY
		Black	BLK	Red/ Auburn	RED
		Blonde	BLN	Sandy	SDY
		Brown	BRN	White	WHI

Each applicant MUST have his/her fingerprints imprinted only in **BLACK INK** on each fingerprint card. Fingerprints should be taken at a local law enforcement agency. There may be a fee for this service. We advise that you should call first as to a convenient time.

DO NOT FOLD FINGERPRINT CARD. Use a 9" X 12" envelope to return your completed application and fingerprint card with fees. Write "DO NOT FOLD" on the envelope. If your card is folded, you will need to complete and submit a new fingerprint card. **THIS WILL CAUSE A DELAY IN DETERMINING YOUR ELIGIBILITY FOR EXAMINATION OR LICENSURE.**

FINGERPRINT PROCESSING FEE

The fingerprint processing fee is in addition to the application fee. This fee is **not refundable** and is subject to change by the DOJ without notice.

The appropriate fingerprint processing fee is **payable to the Board of Registered Nursing** by check or money order in U.S. currency. The application fee and fingerprint fee may be combined and submitted to the Board with one check or money order in U.S. currency.

LIVE SCAN PROCESS

For applicants residing in or near California, we recommend that you use this new, rapid technology. Simply obtain the triplicate form for Live Scan service from the Board of Registered Nursing, complete the sections marked with a red X, and take it to a Live Scan site along with your fee for processing. At the Live Scan site they will scan your fingerprints electronically and transmit them immediately for processing. After you have had your fingerprints scanned, **be sure to attach the second copy of your Live Scan form to your licensing application packet when you mail it to the Board.**

Visit www.ag.ca.gov/fingerprints/publications/contact.pdf to locate Live Scan sites. Most local law enforcement offices in California have Live Scan equipment. Hours of operation and fees vary, so please contact the Live Scan site directly for information.

Using Live Scan can help speed your licensure because the Board receives fingerprint results from this new technology much quicker than through the manual card process. On average, Live Scan results take 1-2 weeks, while manual fingerprint cards can take 1-2 months. (Processing times at DOJ can vary.)

IV. COMPLETING THE CONFIRMATION CARD

The Board will acknowledge receipt of an application if the applicant completes and affixes the proper postage to the CONFIRMATION CARD. This card is being provided as an optional service.

V. **SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER**

Disclosure of your social security number is mandatory. Section 30 of the Business and Professions Code and Public Law 94-455 (42 USCA 405 (c)(2)(C)) authorize collection of your social security number. Your social security number will be used exclusively for tax enforcement purposes, for purposes of compliance with any judgment or order for family support in accordance with Section 11350.6 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, or for verification of licensure or examination status by a licensing or examination entity which utilizes a national examination where licensure is reciprocal with the requesting state. **If you fail to list your social security number, your application for initial or renewal license will not be processed.** You will also be reported to the Franchise Tax Board, which may assess a \$100 penalty against you. Questions regarding the Franchise Tax Board should be directed to either (800) 852-7050 or (800) 852-5711; Out-of-country (916) 854-6500.

VI. **BOARD'S ADDRESS**

The Board's mailing address is:

Board of Registered Nursing
P.O. Box 944210
Sacramento, CA 94244-2100

If you wish to deliver your application in person or by overnight mail, the Board's street address is:

Board of Registered Nursing
400 R Street, Suite 4030
Sacramento, CA 95814-6239

VII. **APPLICATION FOR LICENSE**

Applicants must submit the following items:

1. Completed **examination application AND one fingerprint card/Live Scan service application** with the **total fee** (U.S. Currency). Complete the FINGERPRINT CARD as directed in the INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING FINGERPRINT CARDS. **The fee is an earned fee** for evaluation of your application and processing of the fingerprint card and **is NOT refundable**. Submit the appropriate nonrefundable TOTAL FEE as directed on the attached Application Fee Schedule.
2. One recent 2" x 2" passport-type **photograph**.
3. Completed **confirmation card** to confirm receipt of application by the Board.
4. Completed **Request for Accommodation of Disabilities** form, if applicable.
5. **Request For Transcript** form(s) completed and forwarded directly from the nursing school(s) with certified transcripts.

International graduates: If you were educated **outside the US**, submit a copy of your **license or diploma** that allows you to practice professional nursing in your country. **If you do not hold a license, a written explanation is required.** Please refer to the **Supplemental Application Instructions and Information Needed for Transcripts** memos included in this packet regarding requests for transcripts from your school of nursing. Also, provide copies of your certificates for midwifery and psychiatric nursing, if applicable.

VII. APPLICATION FOR LICENSE (con'td)

6. If applicable, documents and/or letters explaining prior convictions or disciplinary action and attesting to your rehabilitation as directed in Section II of the General Information about Licensure Requirements (page 2).

VIII. INTERIM PERMIT

First-time examination candidates may apply for an Interim Permit to work while awaiting the results of their examination. Important facts to keep in mind about Interim Permits:

Interim permits cannot be issued until all nursing requirements are completed and the applicant has been found eligible for the examination. Interim permits will be issued one time only.

"A permittee shall practice under the direct supervision of a registered nurse who shall be present and available on the patient care unit during all the time the permittee is rendering professional services. The supervising registered nurse may delegate to the permittee any function taught in the permittee's basic nursing program which, in the judgement of the supervising registered nurse, the permittee is capable of performing." (Section 1414(c), Title 16, California Code of Regulations.)

Interim permits are valid for no longer than six months. Interim permits are null and void as soon as examination results are sent to the applicant. If test results are sent before the end of the six months, the interim permit expires immediately. (Section 1414(b), Title 16, California Code of Regulations.)

To qualify for an interim permit, the examination applicant must meet the following requirements:

1. Completed **Application for Licensure By Examination**.
2. One completed **fingerprint card or second copy of Live Scan service application form**.
3. Completed **Application for Interim Permit**.
4. Appropriate **total fee** as indicated on the Application Fee Schedule.
5. A copy of your license or diploma from the country **where you were educated**.
6. Passage of an English comprehension examination if you are from a non-English speaking country or **did not take** your country's licensing examination in English. Passage of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is acceptable. It is suggested that if you decide to take the TOEFL, you should apply as soon as possible as it takes several months from the time of filing until your TOEFL results are received. TOEFL is located at Box 6151, Princeton, NJ 08541-6151; phone number (609) 771-7100.

IX. REQUEST FOR TRANSCRIPT

Mail the **Request for Transcript** form to your nursing school(s) with the fee required by the school. **The official transcripts must include all completed course work and reflect the degree awarded and date conferred**. Transcripts are **not accepted** from applicants or if stamped "issued to student."

CALIFORNIA GRADUATES:

- The Request for Transcript form must be completed by your nursing school with official transcripts showing degree awarded and date conferred.

IX. REQUEST FOR TRANSCRIPT (con'td)

CALIFORNIA NON-GRADUATES AND LVN-30 UNIT OPTION:

- The Request for Transcript form must be completed by your nursing school with official transcripts showing completion of all nursing requirements.

APPLICANTS EDUCATED OUTSIDE THE US:

- If your transcript is in a foreign language, you must have it translated into English by a certified translator or translation service who signs the document attesting to its authenticity. The original foreign language transcript and the English translation of the transcript, must **both** be sent to the Board.
- Transcripts are required from all colleges and/or universities you attended that reflect courses required for a degree in nursing, including general education course requirements and all nursing courses. Transcripts must be received and evaluated by the Board prior to being found eligible for the NCLEX examination.
- Your education must meet the requirements for California licensure. If any deficiencies are identified, you must complete an approved course(s) prior to being found eligible for the examination.
- Education as a medical doctor is not acceptable to meet registered nursing requirements.

The Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools examination is not required by the Board to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN).

- **Note:** To ensure the earliest possible examination date, request the transcript from your school(s) well in advance because some applicants have found that it can take up to 4-6 months to obtain complete transcripts.

You need to allow sufficient time to obtain additional information from the school in case the transcript is not complete or the Board needs more information regarding your completed program. Transcripts must be submitted from all nursing programs attended, such as midwifery or psychiatric programs. The transcripts must also include the clinical portion of an applicant's education.

US GRADUATES OTHER THAN CALIFORNIA, INCLUDING NEW YORK REGENTS (EXCELSIOR COLLEGE) EXTERNAL DEGREE GRADUATES:

- If you are a graduate from a US school other than California, transcripts are required from **all colleges and/or universities** you attended that reflect courses required for a degree in nursing, including general education course requirements and all nursing courses. Transcripts must be received and evaluated by the Board prior to being found eligible for examination.
- Your education must meet the requirements for California licensure. If any deficiencies are identified, you must complete the course work prior to being found eligible for the examination.

X. EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

APPLICANTS EDUCATED OUTSIDE THE US, US GRADUATES, AND CALIFORNIA NON-GRADUATES COMPLETING NURSING REQUIREMENTS:

- Section 2736 of the Business and Professions Code states that applicants must have satisfactorily completed instruction in an accredited school of professional nursing that meets California's educational requirements.

CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS: LVN-30 UNIT OPTION

- A copy of your current license to practice as a Licensed Vocational Nurse is required, as well as the year first licensed.
- Following LVN licensure, you must have completed professional registered nursing courses in a California school accredited by the Board which is beyond the first year and includes **theory** with **concurrent clinical practice** in advanced medical-surgical, mental health, psychiatric and geriatric nursing, physiology, and microbiology.
- Courses required for vocational nurse licensure do not count toward fulfillment of the **additional** RN educational requirements.
- The New York External Degree Program (Excelsior College) **CANNOT** be used to satisfy the LVN-30 Unit Option.

CORPSMEN:

Pursuant to Section 1418 of the Business and Professions Code, corpsmen must meet the same theory and clinical qualifications as that of a registered nurse. As a result, those applicants applying for licensure based on military training and experience may not meet the minimum qualifications for licensure.

The Board suggests that you contact a college in your area regarding your educational background. The college may be able to advise you if you will be able to use any of your course work and/or training toward a degree in registered nursing.

Also, you may want to contact the Board of Licensed Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians to inquire about licensure requirements for a licensed vocational nurse. That board may be contacted at (916) 263-7800 and is located at 2535 Capitol Oaks Drive, Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95833.

If you choose to submit an application for licensure, your fees will be cashiered and your application will be evaluated.

- Please mail the Request for Transcript form to the school of nursing with the fee required by the school.
- Transcripts must be received and evaluated by the Board prior to being found eligible for the examination.

If you have any questions, please contact the Board at (916) 322-3350.

X. EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS (con'td)

NOTE: For California licensees who wish to seek licensure by endorsement to another state, other states requiring graduation from a nursing program **MAY NOT ACCEPT** the California license of California Non-Graduates, LVN-30 Unit Option, and Corpsmen.

XI. CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES – REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

The California Fair Employment and Housing Act¹ (“FEHA”) grants qualified individuals with disabilities who participate in the examination process protection from unlawful discrimination.

More specifically, the FEHA protects individuals with physical or mental disabilities, cosmetic disfigurement or anatomical loss or individuals regarded as or with a record of any disability who is able to perform the essential functions in an examination setting for the NCLEX-RN with or without an accommodations. A disability is a limitation of a major life activity that makes achievement difficult, requires special education or services, or affects social activities or interactions. Impairments that are not disabilities are sexual behavior disorders, compulsive gambling, kleptomania, pyromania, substance abuse disorders resulting from current and unlawful use of controlled substance.

While the board is not required to allow an accommodation that fundamentally alters the nature of the examination, the board will grant any reasonable accommodation and engage in an interactive process with each applicant who requests an accommodation to ensure that individuals with disabilities are able to meaningfully participate in the examination process.

The board will make any reasonable modifications to its policies, practices, and procedures to accommodate an individual with a disability.

The board is not able to provide reasonable accommodations to individuals unless the board is made aware of the individual’s need. An application who needs an accommodation to be able to participate in the examination, must advise the board by the time of application for the examination. This notification should include sufficient documentation to enable the board to determine whether or not the requested accommodation is reasonable and will not fundamentally alter the nature of the examination.

The board is prohibited by law from requiring an individual with a disability to accept an accommodation if the individual chooses not to accept it.

If you have a disability which may require accommodations of the examination process or access to the examination center, you must submit with your application the following **REQUIRED** information:

1. **A Request For Accommodation Of Disabilities** form completed and signed by the applicant. This form is included in the application packet.
2. **A Professional Evaluation And Documentation Of A Disability** form completed and signed by a professional evaluator or equivalent information on original letterhead stationery of the evaluator. This form is included in the application packet.

XI. CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES – REQUEST FOR ACCOMMODATIONS (con'td)

3. If applicable, a **Nursing Program Verification** form indicating what accommodation(s) were granted in testing procedures during the nursing program. This form should be completed and signed by the nursing program Dean or Director or their designee or equivalent information on original letterhead stationery of the nursing program. This form is included in the application packet.

The required information must be completed and submitted with your application or your examination could be delayed. If you have any questions, you may contact the Testing Specialist by writing to the Board address, Attn: Testing Specialist, or by calling (916) 322-3350.

Any examination accommodations, including aids brought into the testing center must have **pre-approval** of the Board.

¹The California Fair Employment and Housing Act as amended by AB2222, Government Code section 12900 et seq. effective January 1, 2001, grants applicants participating in a licensure examination more protection from unlawful discrimination than the federal Americans With Disabilities Act.

XII. NURSING PRACTICE ACT

It is the applicant's responsibility to keep current on the laws pertaining to the practice of registered nursing, as these laws are subject to change. California laws pertaining to the practice of registered nursing can be requested by contacting:

**Publications Section
California Department of General Services
P.O. Box 1015
North Highlands, CA 95660
(916) 928-4630
Cost: \$20.00**